

## ID guide

# Skates and Rays

### Blue Skate

**RJB**

150cm

### Flapper Skate

**RJB**

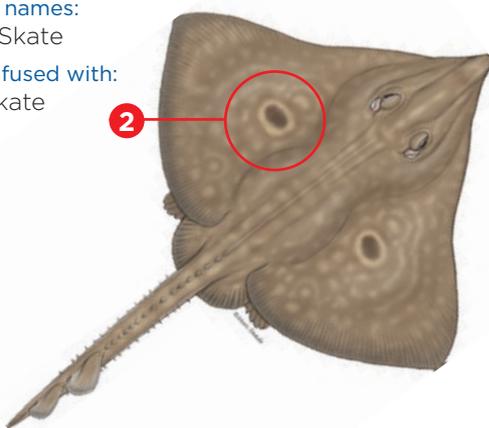
285cm

Because the code **RJB** is currently used for both the Flapper Skate and Blue Skate, please add a note in the vessel logbook stating which of the two species was caught, as well as estimated quantity returned to the water. This information will improve understanding of the stocks.

Scientific name:  
*Dipturus batis*

Alternative names:  
Common Skate

Can be confused with:  
Flapper Skate

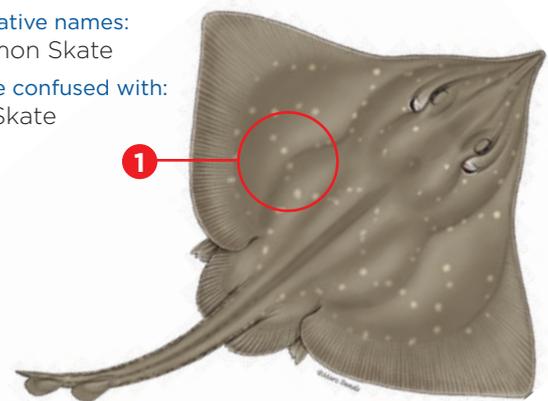


- 1 Top-side mostly brownish with paler blotches.
- 2 Dark spot surrounded by pale ring present on each wing.
- 3 Under-side highly variable: dark on small specimens, becoming white in larger specimens.

Scientific name:  
*Dipturus intermedia*

Alternative names:  
Common Skate

Can be confused with:  
Blue Skate



- 1 Top-side mostly dark olive-green with some pale spots, becoming grey-brown in larger specimens.
- 2 Blotch surrounded by grouped pale spots visible on each wing.
- 3 Under-side highly variable: small specimens have dark edges becoming white in larger specimens.

*NB: recent research shows the 'Common Skate' to be two genetically distinct species: Blue Skate (*Dipturus batis*) and Flapper Skate (*Dipturus intermedia*). Names shown here are provisional, however widely accepted.*

## Black Skate

JAD

200cm

Scientific name:

*Dipturus nidarosiensis*

Alternative names:

Norwegian Skate

Can be confused with:

Long-nosed Skate



- 1 Long, pointed snout.
- 2 Distinctly thin tail.
- 3 Top-side solid, dark brown/black.
- 4 Under-side grey/brown.
- 5 Usually covered with black mucus when caught.

## Long-nosed Skate

RJO

150cm

Scientific name:

*Dipturus oxyrinchus*

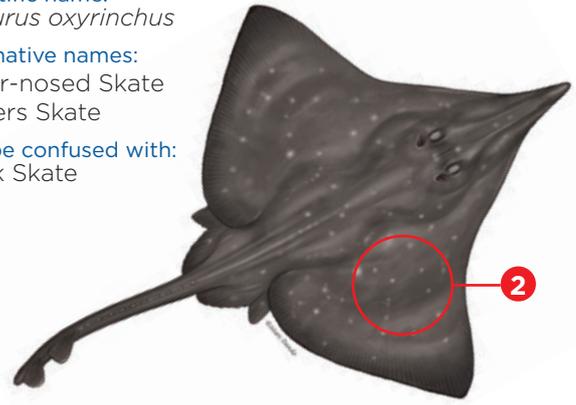
Alternative names:

Spear-nosed Skate

Snipers Skate

Can be confused with:

Black Skate



- 1 Conspicuously long, pointed snout.
- 2 Light and dark spots on top-side.
- 3 Top and under-side light brown in juveniles; darker to grey in adults.

## Spotted Ray

RJM

80cm

Scientific name:

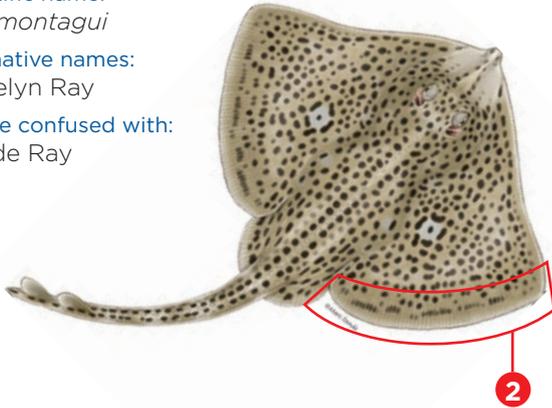
*Raja montagui*

Alternative names:

Homelyn Ray

Can be confused with:

Blonde Ray



- 1 Top-side pale brown to yellow.
- 2 Numerous dark spots which do not extend to very edge of disc.
- 3 Rosette 'eye-spots' often present on each wing.

## Blonde Ray

RJH

120cm

Scientific name:

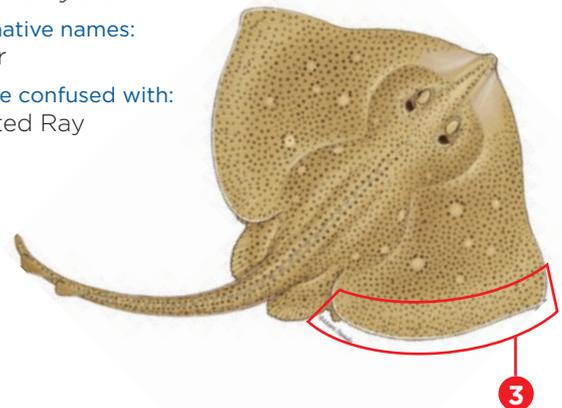
*Raja brachyura*

Alternative names:

Roker

Can be confused with:

Spotted Ray



- 1 Short snout
- 2 Top-side pale brown, covered in dark spots.
- 3 Spots reach to very edge of wings.
- 4 Larger, paler spots scattered on disc.

## Starry Skate

RJR

60cm

Scientific name:

*Amblyraja radiata*

Alternative names:

Starry Ray

Thorny Skate



- 1 Short blunt snout.
- 2 Top-side plain or with dark spots - regularly a single white spot beside each eye.
- 3 Under-side white, sometimes with dark blotches.

## Thornback Ray

RJC

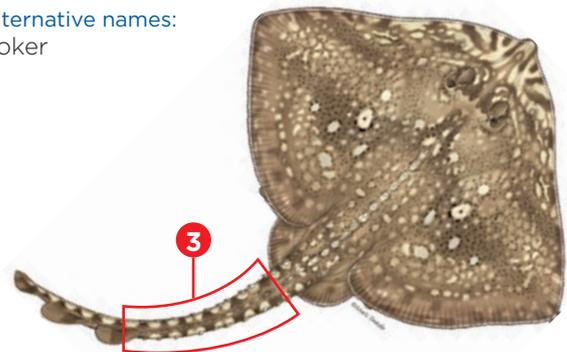
130cm

Scientific name:

*Raja clavata*

Alternative names:

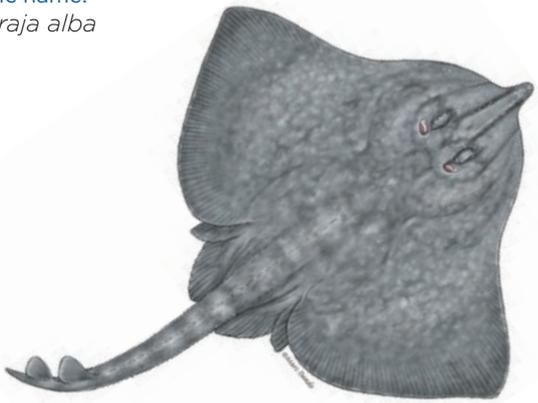
Roker



- 1 Top-side dark brown to grey.
- 2 Highly variable patterning.
- 3 Distinct dark/light banding on tail.
- 4 Under-side white with dark margins.

<b>White Skate</b>	<b>RJA</b>	200cm	
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**Scientific name:**  
*Rostroraja alba*

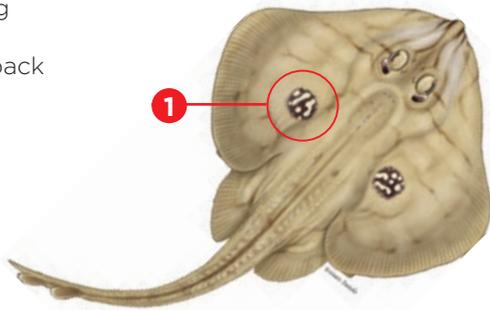


1 Long snout with broad base.  
2 Top-side grey/blue in adults, red/brown in juveniles.  
3 Pattern of light and dark spots and blotches on top-side.  
4 Under-side white with darker margins.

<b>Cuckoo Ray</b>	<b>RJN</b>	75cm	
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**Scientific name:**  
*Leucoraja naevus*

**Alternative names:**  
Pudding  
Stars  
Crownback



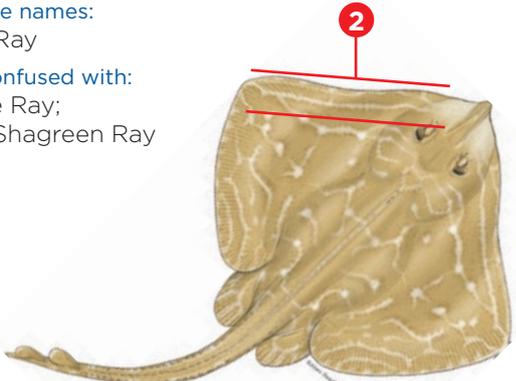
1 Distinct large black and yellow eye-spot on each wing.

<b>Small-eyed Ray</b>	<b>RJE</b>	90cm	
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**Scientific name:**  
*Raja microocellata*

**Alternative names:**  
Painted Ray

**Can be confused with:**  
Undulate Ray;  
juvenile Shagreen Ray



1 Top-side pale sandy brown.  
2 Light bands running parallel to edge of disc.

<b>Undulate Ray</b>	<b>RJU</b>	>100cm	
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**Scientific name:**  
*Raja undulata*

**Alternative names:**  
Painted Ray

**Can be confused with:**  
Small-eyed Ray



1 Top-side light yellow to black.  
2 Pattern of dark wavy bands bordered by rows of white spots.  
3 Under-side white with dark margins.

<b>Shagreen Ray</b>	<b>RJF</b>	120cm	
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**Scientific name:**  
*Leucoraja fullonica*

**Alternative names:**  
Shagreen Skate  
Fuller's Ray

**Can be confused with:**  
Small-eyed Ray (juvenile  
Shagreen Rays can have dark banding similar to the Small-eyed Ray).

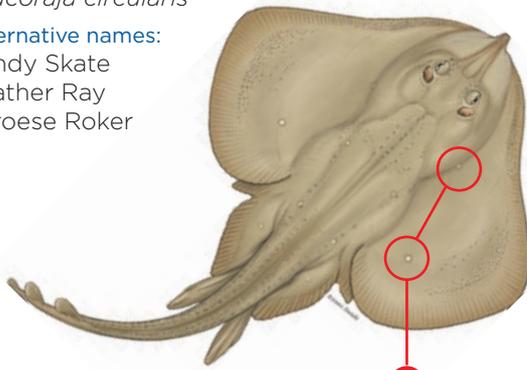


1 Adults solid ash grey/brown.  
2 Inconspicuous darker lines may run across body.  
3 Under-side white, possibly with dark snout.

<b>Sandy Ray</b>	<b>RJI</b>	120cm	
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**Scientific name:**  
*Leucoraja circularis*

**Alternative names:**  
Sandy Skate  
Leather Ray  
Faroese Roker



1 4 to 6 symmetrical creamy spots on each wing.  
2 Top-side light brown (sandy) to red brown.  
3 Under-side white.

If the skate or ray you've caught does not match one shown in this guide, please contact the Shark Trust on 01752 672020 or email [enquiries@sharktrust.org](mailto:enquiries@sharktrust.org).

The species illustrated here are the most commonly caught in fishing grounds round the British Isles. Other species may be encountered in the extremes of these areas.



**RJB**

**FAO code**

150cm

**Maximum total length (cm)**



**No current fisheries restrictions**



**Fisheries restrictions in some areas**



**Zero-TAC or Prohibited Species**

The above colour ratings correct as at September 2016.

## TAGGED SKATES AND RAYS

If you catch a tagged skate or ray, please forward the location, date and tag details to the organisation shown on the tag, or email [enquiries@sharktrust.org](mailto:enquiries@sharktrust.org). Where possible, take a photo and return tagged skates and rays to the water alive.

For full details of all fishing restrictions, visit [www.sharktrust.org/advisories](http://www.sharktrust.org/advisories)

Illustrations by Marc Dando

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*Our Mission: Supporting a profitable, sustainable and socially responsible future for the seafood industry.*